[Historical Georgia]

mind, had already created the wherewithal to satisfy its credu- ooo
lity—priesthoods which at once lived upon and satisfied "the believer". For the human mind in its pathetic aching for finality, for an attainable perfection, always sets up fetishes, the idealization of hopes and the contrary embodiment of fears—religions and social systems—that encumber it. And this will go on, in religion and in politics, until men realize, as they have been taught by experience, that there is no foreseeable finality; that all will change and that change is the salt of life; that faith rests in themselves; that divinity, untouchable and not to be imagined, rests here around ourselves and lies forward in the spaceless spaces of eternity. And so out of credulity, we have that great corporate body catering for credulity; and like a gigantic and fraudulent insurance upon the divinity of men, it sprawls across the ages —the community of priests. Therefore in approaching the history of Christianity in Georgia we do not seek to inquire when the Georgians became Christians, but when the priesthood in Georgia took over the forms of Christianity.

The Christian religion was introduced into Georgia in the 779
fourth century A.D. under the influence of the Græco-Roman world. The Christian faith, in the pure elements of its early form certainly produced a revolution in the minds of the Georgians of the following centuries. The essential stem of early Christian faith is self-discipline, and in studying the psychology of the Georgians during different epochs, we can appreciate the real values of Christianity in its conversion of the human mind from the irresponsible ingenuousness of the pagan which is exemplified in Xenophon's account of the Mossynoekhoi, to the courageous self-discipline, the conscientious charity and the intellectual poise of the mediæval mind, of which in Georgia Queen Tamara, Sargisi of Tmogvi and King Dmitri II, are the best representative types.

Christianity in Georgia produced its many strong thinkers and its single-minded protagonists of faith. In the sixth [797] ●
century there were the remarkable missions to the Huns undertaken by Aghovanian monks to which reference has already been made. In the seventh century we read of the saintly life and martyrdom of Neophyte, Bishop of Urbnissi, and in the ninth century we find St. Grigoli of Khandzti fulminating from his monastery on the Chorokhi against the matrimonial aberrations of the Kuropalatês Adarnasé.

The Georgian Church went the way of all other churches. 771
The bleak strong spirits built it—and passed into a memory